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29th Meeting

Tuesday, 21 November 1995, 3 p.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdenechuluun (Mongolia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.55 p.m.

Agenda items 57 to 81 *(continued)*

Action on draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: At this meeting the Committee will proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 and the amendments to it, in document A/C.1/50/L.62.

Before the Committee proceeds to take a decision on the draft resolution I shall call on those representatives wishing to make statements other than in explanation of their positions or votes on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1.

Mr. Ledogar (United States of America): Until now there has been a general understanding in the Committee and in the General Assembly that all decisions concerning the convening, as well as the outcome or product, of a special session on disarmament, must be by consensus. Draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 clearly does not enjoy consensus. Many in the Committee believe that the time is not ripe for holding a special session on disarmament. However, a group of States is seeking to impose its will on others by resorting to a vote.

This afternoon's proceedings are all about the question whether or not the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 want to win a vote and in the process lose any possibility of a special session on disarmament. That is the issue before us.

Any decision on holding a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament that is objected to by a number of States, including several major Powers, is an advance invitation to the failure of such a session. How can a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament result in anything useful if not all of the major Powers participate?

The amendments proposed by the United States offer an opportunity for the international community to arrive at a rational, common decision concerning a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, taking into account the major developments in the disarmament field that are expected between now and the end of the century — developments such as the conclusion of treaties on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban and on the cut-off of the production of fissile material for weapons purposes; the entry into force and implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START II); and we also anticipate further progress in conventional arms control.

The United States understands that the last special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament cost about $7.5 million — that was in 1988 dollars, I believe. I do not know what a 1997 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament would cost but it would probably be in a range upwards of $20 million.

On the basis of that consideration alone, an early fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to

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disarmament would be inappropriate. Now it is not the time, especially in view of the financial difficulties of the United Nations, to think of big conferences but instead to concentrate on the tasks before us, the tasks in existing disarmament forums.

The amendments proposed by my delegation, which have been officially recorded in document A/C.1/50/L.62, consist of a list of amendments that do not necessarily depend one upon the other. I request that any action to be taken on the amendments in A/C.1/50/L.62 be taken item by item and not on the document as a whole.

In the event that there should be a motion of no action on my proposals, I should like the intervention I have just made to be considered as a statement in opposition to such a motion.

Mr. Biorn Lian (Norway): My delegation has been following the debate on this draft resolution with increasing concern. We attach importance to the convening of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We believe the subjects are indeed very important. We therefore encourage everybody to seek common ground on this matter.

Having said that, I believe that the text of the amendments proposed by the United States is far-reaching. It would possibly require long negotiations and because of that, and since I have had contact with some delegations, and since the importance of the date of convening the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament should, as we see it, be taken by consensus, I wish to put forward a very simple oral amendment to operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1. The purpose is to see whether there is still a chance to reach consensus in the Committee on the important matter of the date for convening the session.

The proposal would be as follows: in operative paragraph 1 to replace the words "in 1997" by the words "by 1999". The sentence would then read:

> "Decides to convene its fourth special session on disarmament to be held by 1999, if possible, with the exact date and agenda to be decided upon before the end of the current session of the General Assembly through consultations;".

When we say "by 1999", that could mean before 1999, which is a step in the direction of those who feel that this should happen in 1997, but would be removed from the date mentioned by the United States delegation. This very genuine and sincere effort at a compromise I believe deserves the positive attention of everybody. It is intended to split the difference, so to speak, and set a rather firm timetable for the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, along the lines suggested by the authors of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 in the first place.

That is the proposal: to substitute the words "by 1999" for the words "in 1997". In my view that would firm up the text and will, I hope, be considered as a positive contribution and a genuine attempt at a compromise.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Norway for the introduction of an oral amendment to draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 and for his efforts to bridge the gap between the various delegations on this draft resolution. I appreciate his efforts along these lines.

Mr. García (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In view of the positive changes that have recently taken place internationally — the relaxation of tensions at the global level and the emergence of a new spirit governing relations among nations — the way has been paved for the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. As will be recalled, in the resolution on this topic adopted without a vote last year, the General Assembly decided, in principle, to convene, in 1997 if possible, the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the date to be determined by the General Assembly at this session.

In draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1, introduced by Colombia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Assembly would decide, in operative paragraph 1, to convene its

> "fourth special session on disarmament to be held in 1997, if possible, with the exact date and agenda to be decided before the end of the current session of the General Assembly through consultations".

As will be noted, this wording is similar to that of operative paragraph 1 of the resolution adopted last year which, as has already been said, was adopted without a vote. The year 1997 was considered to be a favourable year in which to hold that special session. It was envisaged that important negotiations now under way in various disarmament fields would be completed before the end of 1996. The Non-Aligned Movement conducted consultations

with concerned delegations and as a result of those consultations it amended its draft resolution, as is reflected in document A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1.

We wish to highlight the constructive spirit that prevailed in consultations with the European Union. Proposals and alternatives were put forward and an attempt was made to bridge differences. That is positive, and that is the spirit that should inspire the work of the Committee.

Unfortunately, however, it has not been possible to reach agreement — but at least we tried. At the same time, at yesterday's meeting the representative of the United States introduced the oral amendments that now appear in document A/C.1/50/L.62. After having considered these amendments we must express regret that they run counter to the spirit and purpose of the draft resolution introduced by Colombia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

It is for this reason that, in the best possible spirit of cooperation and on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, we ask the United States delegation to reconsider its proposal. None the less, we heard what was said by the representative of the United States, which clearly established the position of the United States on this topic, and we regret that we must now, therefore, move that no action be taken on the proposals in document A/C.1/50/L.62. We are inspired by the best possible spirit of cooperation and we are convinced that once we have overcome this obstacle we will move forward in negotiation and in the quest for solutions, the spirit that should prevail in the work of the Committee.

Mr. Jusuf (Indonesia): I have asked to speak in order to second the proposal put forward by the representative of Colombia as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, that the Committee take no action on the amendments contained in document A/C.1/50/L.62.

Mr. Olusanmokun (Nigeria): Nigeria supports the motion that was made by Colombia, on behalf of the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement, to take no action on the amendments contained in document A/C.1/50/L.62. My delegation believes that ample time has been provided for consultations and negotiations on different draft resolutions. The member States of the Non-Aligned Movement even agreed to amend draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 out of respect and consideration for the views of others, but it would appear that this gesture has been ignored by some and a totally different point of view has been put forward in the form of an amendment at this late hour. The purpose of the so-called amendment is not clear but it is obvious that it has not been made with the intention of improving the draft but rather of changing its thrust. The amendment has nothing in common with draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 and should not be considered as an amendment to A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1. We hope that delegations will recognize that fact and disallow action on A/C.1/50/L.62.

The Chairman: Does any other representative wish to make a statement?

Mr. Moradi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have asked to speak, like the representatives of Colombia, Indonesia and Nigeria who have already spoken, in order to support the motion by the representative of Colombia that no action be taken on the amendments in document A/C.1/50/L.62.

My delegation does not consider that these amendments have been made in good faith and with good intentions. They have been made simply to undermine a constructive proposal, namely the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, made by an important group of Member States. We fail to understand why some delegations should take the liberty of resorting to any means possible to destroy this proposed initiative.

The fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament gives us an opportunity to explore ways and means of promoting disarmament, identifying our differences, and finding appropriate solutions for them. Why should some delegations object to this initiative? When it comes to initiatives by non-aligned countries, certain delegations raise the problem of financial implications, but on other initiatives or proposals dealt with in the General Assembly which, in the view of my delegation, do not have any importance but do have financial implications, those same delegations did not raise any question about those financial implications.

My delegation, therefore, also supports the motion by Colombia that no action be taken on the amendments in A/C.1/50/L.62 and we hope that all Member States will support that motion.

The Chairman: Are there any other speakers? There seem to be none.

The Committee has before it a motion put forward by the representative of Colombia that no action be taken on the amendments in A/C.1/50/L.62. The Committee also has

before it an oral amendment from the representative of Norway, and the amendments by the United States in document A/C.1/50/L.62.

Does the no-action motion put forward by the representative of Colombia also concern the oral amendment moved by the Norwegian representative? Would the Colombian representative repeat his proposal?

Mr. García (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The proposal made by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries is a motion for no action. It was addressed to the amendments in document A/C.1/50/L.62 in its entirety.

It could hardly have been addressed to the oral amendment put forward by the representative of Norway since we are not familiar with that amendment. We have only now heard it. We are grateful for it and do recognize in any event that it is an expression of readiness to bring positions together. But our no-action motion refers first and foremost to the amendments presented by the United States in document A/C.1/50/L.62 in its entirety.

The Chairman: I will read out rule 116 of the rules of procedure: "Adjournment of debate":

> "During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote. The Chairman may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this rule."

A motion has been made by the representative of Colombia that no action be taken on the amendments proposed in document A/C.1/50/L.62.

In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour, and two against it. Are there two representatives in favour and two against? Two have already spoken in favour. The representative of the United States made it clear in his statement that the motion was opposed by the United States delegation. Is there a second statement against the motion? If no delegation wishes to speak we will proceed to the vote.

Mr. Ledogar (United States of America): I would have intervened on the basis of rule 116, which you have just read, because you, Sir, seem to have allowed not only Colombia but three other States to speak in favour of the motion of no action, despite the rule. I did not raise a point of order because I would not want to have missed hearing the intervention of one of those States, which has participated in five separate amendment attacks on Western draft resolutions, amendment attacks which have the collective and unique purpose of distorting, changing and altering the thrust of the basic draft resolutions. We have had enough statements in favour of the Colombian proposal of no action.

The Chairman: It was my understanding, before the Legal Counsel arrived, that we were making general statements on draft resolutions before action is taken. The Legal Counsel has now joined us and I am following his counselling. I apologize for the conduct of the Chairman of this meeting. It is very unfortunate but we will now continue.

I now put to the vote the procedural motion of the Colombian representative, which was to take no action on the amendments in document A/C.1/50/L.62 in its entirety.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a recorded vote on the motion proposed by the representative of Colombia that no action be taken on the amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 contained in document A/C.1/50/L.62.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal,

Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay

The motion that no action be taken on the amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 contained in document A/C.1/50/L.62 was adopted by 88 votes to 47, with 7 abstentions.

The Chairman: The Committee now has before it an oral amendment made by the representative of Norway. According to the rules of procedure we must now take up the proposal made by the representative of Norway.

I call on the representative of Colombia on a point of order.

Mr. García (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): With your consent I request the suspension of the meeting for a few minutes so as to consider the proposal made by the representative of Norway.

The Chairman: A very reasonable request to suspend the meeting has been made. May I suspend the meeting for 15 minutes? Would that be enough time?

The meeting was suspended at 4.30 p.m. and resumed at 5.10 p.m.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Norway.

Mr. Biørn Lian (Norway): I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for having given the meeting some time to consider this important issue, the purpose of which was to attempt to find compromise language that could form the basis for a consensus. I repeat that the consultations that have taken place have in my mind reinforced the requirement for a consensus, in the sense that there is wide recognition that taking a decision on this important matter by a vote, with several important countries potentially voting against, is hazardous for further proceedings.

That being said I have come to the conclusion, after a number of contacts, that there is at present no basis for consensus on this point, a fact which I sincerely regret. I hope everybody has understood the effort that my delegation has made in the sense that it was a genuine attempt to find consensus. I regret to have to inform the Committee that it has failed. In the light of this situation I hereby withdraw the amendment I proposed to operative paragraph 1.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Norway for the genuine efforts that he has made to help the Committee to arrive at a consensus.

I call on the representative of Colombia.

Mr. García (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I want to express our gratitude to the distinguished Ambassador of Norway for the efforts that he has made and for his gesture in withdrawing the amendment that he had submitted to the draft proposal submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1.

A separate, recorded vote has been requested on operative paragraphs 1, 2, 4 and 5.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a recorded vote, first on operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1, entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament", which was introduced by the representative of Colombia, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, at the Committee's 16th meeting, held on 8 November 1995.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Japan, Kazakstan, Paraguay, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Ukraine

Operative paragraph 1 was retained by 96 votes to 39, with 10 abstentions.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now vote on operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Japan, Kazakstan, Paraguay, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Ukraine

Operative paragraph 2 was retained by 96 votes to 39, with 9 abstentions.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now commence voting on operative paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakstan, Paraguay, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Ukraine

Operative paragraph 4 was retained by 95 votes to 39, with 11 abstentions.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now commence voting on operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakstan, Paraguay, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Ukraine

Operative paragraph 5 was retained by 95 votes to 39, with 11 abstentions.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a vote on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1, as a whole, was adopted by 98 votes to 2, with 46 abstentions.

The Chairman: I now call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote.

Mr. Martínez Salazar (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am speaking on behalf of the European Union; and the following countries also associate themselves with this statement: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The European Union wishes to express its support for the idea of having a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We take the view that consensus is essential for the convening of such an event. The European Union has made sustained efforts to arrive at a consensus text of a draft resolution that would secure the support of all the members of the Committee. We wish also to express our thanks to Norway for its recent endeavours to reach a compromise on this point.

The European Union abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1 because at this stage we are not yet in a position to accept any specific date. At this point we would like to stress the need to engage in further consultations and to seek consensus among all Member States in respect both of the agenda and of the date of such an event. Accordingly, we very much regret that there was the need for a vote, the result of which is not a good basis for the preparation and holding of the fourth special session devoted to disarmament.

Mr. Richards (New Zealand): The last special session devoted to disarmament was held seven years ago, in 1988. Since then there have been profound changes in the international security situation. As was agreed by consensus last year, another special session would provide an opportunity to review the process of disarmament from the new perspective.

We regret that the Committee was not able to agree on the draft resolution on a special session by consensus. We thought we were moving in that direction with the helpful amendments being floated by the European Union earlier in the week. Unfortunately, the amendments which were the subject of the earlier vote and on which it was agreed that no action be taken did not seem to us to bring consensus closer. It was for that reason that New Zealand voted in favour of the motion to take no action. On the draft resolution as a whole we voted in favour for the reasons I have just set out.

But other things have to be taken into account. New Zealand does not consider it possible or wise to hold the special session in 1997. We welcome the phrase "if

possible". The year 1997 is not a good year in the United Nations calendar. There is a need to take into account not only the disarmament calendar but a proposal which is currently before the Second Committee, where it enjoys broad support, for a special session on environment and development. That is the planned five-year session to revise Agenda 21, the outcome of the Rio de Janeiro Conference. It will be preceded by a preparatory meeting, also in 1997. That will be an important special session, to which countries such as New Zealand intend to devote all their energies. We imagine others, especially smaller States, will do likewise.

There is the question of cost. A special session will cost a great deal of money at a time of financial stringency. It should be expected that for such a sizeable investment the international community will get an agreed, positive and forward-looking basis for its future disarmament programmes. For these reasons careful preparation will be required — more preparation, probably, than we can reasonably contemplate before 1997.

We see merit, therefore, after the due consideration called for in the draft resolution on which we have just voted, in a decision being taken to hold the special session a little later, for example in 1998 or 1999. We commend that thought to all delegations for consideration.

Mr. Bandura (Ukraine) (*interpretation from Russian*): I asked to speak to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.25/Rev.1. My delegation abstained although it agreed with the co-sponsors that there is a need to convene a forum under the aegis of the United Nations that would summarize, as it were, the results of the tremendous work done in recent years and which would determine the direction in which the international community would move in the forthcoming centuries and millenniums and which would make it possible to build a world without conflicts and wars. This is particularly timely after the end of the cold war and the creation of an essentially new climate in the world.

It appears to us to be extremely important, therefore, for such a conference to be concluded successfully and for it to draw up consensus documents which, because of their significance and impact, would be similar to the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament in 1978. Unfortunately, at present there are different approaches as to the need for such a conference and the time at which should be held and also as to its agenda and work. That being the situation at the present time it is very difficult to hope that any constructive work will be done by the Conference and that it will achieve any positive results.

We think that a very sensible proposal was made by the delegation of Norway that this Conference should be convened at a convenient time before 1999. We very much regret that that proposal was not adopted. We believe that would have made it possible to achieve consensus on this important issue.

The Chairman: Does any other representative wish to make an explanation of vote? There seems to be none.

With the adoption of this draft resolution the First Committee has thus completed its work at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

Concluding statement by the Chairman

The Chairman: The work of the First Committee at this fiftieth session is nearing its close. Let me at this time share some thoughts, prompted by the deliberations of the past months, on vital issues of international security and disarmament.

If I were to characterize this session in a few words I would say that it was an intensive and intellectually rewarding exercise. On a more personal note I might add that for me it was a fulfilling experience, though never dull or easy. I can hardly remember a time when the political and emotional temperature has risen as high in the First Committee as it did this year.

Even in this emotionally charged atmosphere, however, delegations never failed to display good will, a spirit of accommodation and a readiness to compromise. They also extended the fullest possible cooperation to the Chair, and for that I am deeply grateful to each and every one.

The last three or four sessions of the General Assembly have taken place in a fundamentally changed environment, one which calls for an accelerated pace of thinking or rethinking of old doctrines, concepts and strategies. Nowhere is this process more clearly defined or more evident than as applied to matters of international security and disarmament.

A number of valuable conclusions are to be drawn from this fact concerning in particular the theoretical underpinnings of disarmament and its practical implementation. Each of these conclusions has had its roots

and prototypes in our deliberations. Let me briefly touch upon some of them.

The first and foremost conclusion is that the time and international climate are quite propitious now for new disarmament undertakings aimed at facilitating the emergence of new security concepts and structures for the last years of the 1990s and beyond. These concepts and structures are currently being built by concerted efforts on the part of the international community, and their details are not yet fully in place. However, we can already define some elements that will determine the place and role of disarmament in the years to come.

The new system of international security must be based on recognition of the fact that security is not merely the by-product of perception. It could have a material and tangible dimension and could therefore exist only as indivisible and equal in scope as well as in content, for all member States of the world community. In other words, "equal security for all" is a modern moral imperative. Moreover, security is by its nature comprehensive and has military, political, economic, ecological, human rights and other aspects.

The importance of disarmament in this complex equation has to some extent been diminished in relation to other contributing factors. However, disarmament still continues to play a unique role, aimed as it is at dismantling the material basis for the making of war.

The comprehensive nature of security requires a new flexibility and a multifaceted approach to disarmament. Depending upon circumstances, it should be comprehensive or specific, global or regional, unilateral, bilateral or multilateral, separate or interconnected, step-by-step but part of a grand strategy — always mutually complementary pieces of one mosaic.

The discussions also revealed that disarmament cannot work without a minimum level of political cooperation based on trust and on recognition that progress comes in incremental steps capitalizing on positive trends. Once again the full and grand debates in the annual examination of the areas of agreement and disagreement on important issues of disarmament and security provide the way to resolve these differences and make progress.

Turning to practical lessons learned, without of course attempting to be all-encompassing or exhaustive, I can point to a few of these trends. From what took place in the Committee it was clear that the nuclear issues still remain the most important — and I would say most divisive — items on the current disarmament agenda. The complex of problems originating in, or directly associated with, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has greatly influenced the positions of States despite what is generally regarded as the successful outcome of the Review and Extension Conference — which, by the way, was neither easy nor assured. But the interlinked decisions of the NPT Review and Extension Conference provided the basis for launching new proposals in this Committee.

The renewed and persistent calls for the earliest possible conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1996 within the Conference on Disarmament was supported by an overwhelming majority of delegations. Adherence to the zero yield was welcomed as an encouraging new development.

This, together with other recent developments which attracted the attention of Governments and the public at large, and which caused a great emotional outcry, shaped the discussions of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban and influenced the deliberations on fissile materials, and prompted the increased emphasis on the elimination of nuclear weapons. Emotions ran high in the conference room when these issues were discussed.

The deliberations on nuclear issues revealed a number of positive trends as well. In this connection the Chair notes with satisfaction the intention of the three nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the additional Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga early in 1996. That is a welcome development indeed.

Although it is regrettable that the Committee was not able to find an acceptable compromise on draft resolutions dealing with such important issues as fissile material and chemical weapons, the accumulation of the habit of open and candid discussions on these issues will, we hope, clear away the obstacles in the future — the very near future, I hope.

The current session came after several noteworthy developments in the field of disarmament, developments that met with overwhelming approval. I mention one example, the signing of the Protocol on blinding laser weapons, which took place in Vienna within the framework of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

While on this subject, let me express my personal feelings regarding the outcome of that Conference. These feelings are a mixture of disappointment and yet of hope — disappointment, because it proved impossible to include in Protocol II relevant clauses on anti-personnel land-mines; hope, because I sincerely believe that the resumed sessions will be more successful in dealing with this problem.

It should be noted that the subject of conventional weapons and conventional disarmament should commend closer attention on the part of the Committee. I am pleased to note that this is gradually becoming the case. Small arms, their transfers and especially the illicit trade in them, which is a relatively new and ever-widening phenomenon fuelled by ongoing ethnic and national conflicts, are, increasingly, attracting the attention of the international community.

There are other no less important disarmament issues that deserve special mention, but because of time constraints I shall limit my remarks to those I have mentioned.

As I said in my general observations at the beginning of my statement, work in the First Committee this year was remarkably intensive with the differences of approach of the various groups more clearly demarcated. Ninety delegations made statements during the general debate. The structured discussion on agreed thematic topics, which is a relatively new innovation, has once again proved to be a suitable arrangement for an unrestricted, free and uninhibited exchange of ideas. The discussions were most lively and about 60 delegations participated in this exercise. I think this format should be retained and further refined.

At the final stage of its work the Committee considered some 62 documents containing draft resolutions, amendments and programme budget implications. Among those, 46 draft resolutions and 3 decisions were adopted. It is important to note that the work was accomplished in fewer meetings than before.

This was not an ordinary session. The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations came at a difficult time for the world and the Organization in many respects, but it also came at a time of great hope and great expectations. I believe that all delegations can take some satisfaction from the results of our efforts here. All of us can count some gains and at least some progress towards our hopes and objectives. Let me express my belief that as a result of our patient and persistent efforts, the Committee also made a small contribution to the realization of those hopes for a better and more peaceful world, a world free from wars and violence.

Before concluding, I should like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Marrack Goulding, for his thoughtful contribution to our deliberations and for the constant and lively interest he took in the work of the Committee.

May I avail myself of this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to all delegations and in particular to the officers of the Committee, the two distinguished Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Antonio de Icaza of Mexico and Mr. Wolfgang Hoffmann of Germany, as well as Mr. Rajab Sukayri, the Committee's Rapporteur.

May I also express my special gratitude to the Director of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Prvoslav Davinic for the cooperation he has extended to us and for the valuable advice and counsel he has provided to me on various issues.

May I now express my deep and sincere gratitude to Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, Secretary of the First Committee, for the exemplary manner in which he has guided the work of the Committee at all stages. His wide knowledge and experience in the field of disarmament and his professionalism have, as usual, proved to be of great benefit to all of us.

I also want to convey my thanks to the other staff members from the Centre for Disarmament Affairs who have so efficiently contributed to our work, including Mr. Sattar, able Deputy to Mr. Kheradi, Mr. Lin, Mr. Alasaniya, Mr. Cottafavi, Ms Stoute, Mr. Fung and Mr. Chung, as well as Ms. Kulanusorstit, Ms. Nania and Mr. Ramamoorthy.

In addition, I also thank the interpreters, press officers, verbatim reporters, conference officers and other members of the Secretariat, who displayed a wonderful spirit of cooperation during the long and gruelling hours spent in furthering the work of the Committee.

To those who are staying I wish a very happy Thanksgiving. To those who are leaving, *bon voyage* and *au revoir*.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.